

JUST HIT THEM!

This supplement provides GMs and players with some optional guidelines on how to integrate skills and actions with melee attacks during combat.

WHY?

There are a couple of martial classes that allow some battlefield control during combat encounters, but outside of this a character's actions are either "Hit it" or "Cast a spell". Even those martial classes have a limited list of possible actions available to them and have a limited number of uses.

After playing a while, players tend to find that their characters develop an optimal tactic during combat and trying other things becomes 'sub-optimal'.

These optional rules give every player a few more options during combat that are thematically based on how the player has built the character.

TRADE DAMAGE FOR EFFECT

The principle is that the damage inflicted in a blow can be traded in to purchase a maneuver that will have an effect on the target: If the character hits their opponent they can choose to inflict the damage **OR** perform one of the maneuvers they have access to per the list below.

DAMAGE AS CURRENCY

Optional variation: Damage has an exchange rate that the player can use to trade for an effect. The player rolls damage and 'spends' some of it to perform a maneuver.

- The player gambles [X] hp worth of damage. If this exceeds the foe's relevant stat, then the player succeeds, otherwise they fail. Either way they cannot inflict the HP damage gambled in this way.
- Only the GM knows the stat tested against and what the number is.
- Only one maneuver can be attempted per attack.
- Any remaining damage can be inflicted.

This option is very *crunchy* to implement and will slow down combat. But it will suit some players and GMs.

NON-LETHAL

If your character attacks and manages to get through the armour, magic & natural nimbleness of an opponent to inflict damage, (ie you roll over their AC to hit them) then the damage rolled is the *maximum* you can inflict - you can choose to pull the blow in order to do all of it, none of it, or anywhere in between.

Narrating this can be turning the flat of the blade, hitting with the pommel, choking out, a kick to the nuts, slamming head into wall, having the skill to avoid major arteries, or whatever else sounds cool and bad-ass.

Reducing the damage could be used to intimidate, demoralise, confuse, embarrass or just put the foe in their place. Or just to make it "non-lethal" and stop short of killing your foe.

RANGED DAMAGE

A character is not normally able to adjust the damage being inflicted *after* a projectile or magic effect has left the character's hand. This makes it impossible to reduce the damage of a ranged attack in order to use any of these maneuvers.

RANGED MANEUVERS

Optional variation: If the player *really* wants to use one of the associated maneuvers, they can choose to make the ranged attack with disadvantage **and** reduce the damage as per the trade-off.

STANDARD MANEUVERS

There are optional rules in the PHB & DMG that allow any character to *shove*, *grapple* and *disarm* a foe in place of an attack with a contested roll. The rules presented here are an additional way to perform the same maneuvers and do not replace them.

The *combat maneuvers* available to a fighter and *ki strikes* available to a monk allow them to perform specific maneuvers in addition to the damage inflicted. These rules should not interfere with these classes as here they reduce the damage inflicted.

MONKS AND BATTLE MASTERS

Optional variation: A player may spend a superiority dice or ki point to deal normal damage while performing any of the applicable maneuvers below.

EFFECTS

The attacker can choose one of the following maneuvers instead of rolling damage. Performing any of these maneuvers on a foe **is** an attack action: the same attack roll is made to try and exceed the foe's AC.

Some of these maneuvers will make no sense in a specific combat encounter (eg if the target cannot understand the language). It is the DMs discretion if the specific maneuver works at all.

If the foe is larger, legendary or has a trait that makes it difficult for the effect to happen then the GM may have the target roll a save against the effect. Otherwise, if it's fun and cool, it just happens.

The list of standard maneuvers below are available to any character. The list of skill based maneuvers are only available to the characters proficient in the relevant skill.

STANDARD

These maneuvers are available to all characters:

Push	Move your opponent 5ft in any direction.
Disarm	Your opponent releases an item held in one hand.
Trip	Your opponent becomes <i>prone</i> (not necessarily grounded).
Blind	Your opponent is <i>blinded</i> for a round.
Grapple	Your opponent becomes <i>grappled</i> .

SKILLS

Characters only have access to the maneuvers listed against the skills they are proficient with:

Acrobatics	Flip. Flip over or slide under the foe's guard and reposition yourself to any space within 5ft of them
Animal Handling	Mount. Raise yourself onto the back of the creature you're fighting (disadvantage for it to hit you and you move with it.)
Arcana	Probe. You know either the magical advantages your foe has, the magic defences they have or any spell they are under.
Athletics	Overbearing. Choose two of the <i>Standard</i> maneuvers to automatically apply to your foe in one combined maneuver..
Deception	Convince. The foe has disadvantage on any skill checks and underlying saves for the stat you specify during this combat.
History	Demoralise. The foe has disadvantage on melee attacks within this combat until they take damage..
Insight	Puppet. You trick your foe into attacking a target within 5ft of you on their next attack (not necessarily a creature).
Intimidation	Scare. Foe is <i>frightened</i> of you until you take damage..
Investigation	Weakness. Find an opening in your foes defenses; Your attacks on this foe have <i>advantage</i> until you inflict damage..
Medicine	Pressure Point. Your foe has <i>disadvantage</i> on every roll and half their movement until the start of your next turn.
Nature	Unnatural. You can choose the physical melee damage you inflict on your foe to be either <i>slashing</i> , <i>bludgeoning</i> or <i>piercing</i> .
Perception	Setup. The next melee attack that you hit your foe with automatically becomes a critical hit.
Performance	Showboat. All foes seeing your display are at disadvantage for any attack against you until you take damage.
Persuasion	Give up. If given the opportunity your foe will surrender or flee on their next action. (Or will seek out an opportunity to flee)
Religion	Preach. You recite a psalm or parable that relates to this situation causing your foe to be <i>confused</i> for a round.
Sleight of Hand	Unbuckle. Opponent's armour or clothing loosens and entangles them, reducing their AC by 2 or causing them to lose use of their shield for this combat.
Stealth	Distraction. You can disengage from this foe without provoking an attack of opportunity and if cover is within your movement range, take the <i>hide</i> action as a bonus action.
Survival	Mark. Smell and examine your foe to give you advantage on any <i>survival</i> or <i>perception</i> checks to find it again in the future.
Language	Insult. Your opponent must try to attack you with a melee attack when they next are able.
Tools	?. If you can think of a way that the knowledge of, or skill with your tools could aid in battle, ask the GM.

EXPERTISE

Optional variation: A character with *expertise* in a skill will still be able to inflict half damage while performing the maneuver.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

Optional variation: Rogues using the *jack of all trades* feature to use one of these maneuvers will have to roll a contested skill check.

The above list is inspiration on how to use specific skills; if a player (or GM) suggests another more appropriate way to use a specific skill then I recommend encouraging it and using the rule of cool to adjudicate.

STATS

Characters with a stat of 16 or over in the relevant stat also have access to the following maneuver list:

Strength	Flex. You deform a piece of your foe's equipment; either reduce AC by 2 or primary weapon attack by 2.
Dexterity	Dance. Move up to half your remaining movement and reposition your foe within 5ft of you
Constitution	Masochism. Gain a bonus to the next attack or opposed roll against this foe equal to the damage you take (up to 5)
Intelligence	Outsmart. Use a piece of dangerous terrain, structure, creature or ally that is within 10ft of you to damage, trap, hinder or put your foe in harm's way
Wisdom	Embarrass. Your foe will either flee or enrage to attack <i>recklessly</i> (they have <i>advantage</i> to hit, but all attacks are at <i>advantage</i> to hit them) 50/50 modified by GM discretion.
Charisma	Infatuate. Your foe will focus solely on you for the duration of combat.

SKILL CHECKS

Optional variation: A player wanting to perform the specific skill maneuver has to roll a skill check, opposed with relevant foe's stat bonus after the attack roll to successfully perform the maneuver.

If using *jack of all trades* then this roll is at disadvantage for the player.

JUST HIT THEM!

Sometimes the best option **is** to just hit them - deal damage and not try to get trixy about it.

However if a character is not going to deal damage to their foe anyway, then instead of an attack roll they have a few other combat options available to them:

- *Help* action gives *advantage* to an ally (For their next attack or skill check)
- *Dodge* action gives *disadvantage* to any incoming attacks you can see (and advantage on dex saves)
- *Disengage* action lets you prevent any opportunity attacks against you while you move.
- *Dash* action allows you to move your movement again.
- In addition, you can dive *prone* at no cost (giving ranged attacks *disadvantage* against hitting you, but melee attacks will have *advantage*. And it will cost ½ your movement to stand again)
- The *Use Object* action can be used to activate things, drink potions, and generally interact with things.
- If the situation is right, you could also try to *Hide* or *Search* actions. (Note that you can't hide from a creature that can clearly see you.)

And the standard contested maneuvers are still available for players to replace an attack action with:

- *Shove* action either knocks a foe *prone* or moves them 5ft away from you.
- *Grapple* action reduces a foe's speed to 0, and that's it.
- *Disarm* forces a foe to drop what it's holding (they have advantage if holding with both hands.)


CREDITS

This document was written and formatted with Google Docs and published on the [DMs Guild](#)

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